

S. 1684

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Return of Talent Act".

SEC. 2. RETURN OF TALENT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title III of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1401 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 317 the following:

"TEMPORARY ABSENCE OF PERSONS PARTICIPATING IN THE RETURN OF TALENT PROGRAM

"SEC. 317A. (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of State, shall establish the Return of Talent Program to permit eligible aliens to temporarily return to the alien's country of citizenship in order to make a material contribution to that country if the country is engaged in post-conflict or natural disaster reconstruction activities, for a period not exceeding 24 months, unless an exception is granted under subsection (d).

"(b) ELIGIBLE ALIEN.—An alien is eligible to participate in the Return of Talent Program established under subsection (a) if the alien meets the special immigrant description under section 101(a)(27)(N).

"(c) FAMILY MEMBERS.—The spouse, parents, siblings, and any minor children of an alien who participates in the Return of Talent Program established under subsection (a) may return to such alien's country of citizenship with the alien and reenter the United States with the alien.

"(d) EXTENSION OF TIME.—The Secretary of Homeland Security may extend the 24-month period referred to in subsection (a) upon a showing that circumstances warrant that an extension is necessary for post-conflict or natural disaster reconstruction efforts.

"(e) RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS.—An immigrant described in section 101(a)(27)(N) who participates in the Return of Talent Program established under subsection (a), and the spouse, parents, siblings, and any minor children who accompany such immigrant to that immigrant's country of citizenship, shall be considered, during such period of participation in the program—

"(1) for purposes of section 316(a), physically present and residing in the United States for purposes of naturalization within the meaning of that section; and

"(2) for purposes of section 316(b), to meet the continuous residency requirements in that section.

"(f) OVERSIGHT AND ENFORCEMENT.—The Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of State, shall oversee and enforce the requirements of this section."

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 317 the following:

"317A. Temporary absence of persons participating in the Return of Talent Program".

SEC. 3. ELIGIBLE IMMIGRANTS.

Section 101(a)(27) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(27)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (L), by inserting a semicolon after "Improvement Act of 1998";

(2) in subparagraph (M), by striking the period and inserting "; or"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(N) an immigrant who—

"(i) has been lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence;

"(ii) demonstrates an ability and willingness to make a material contribution to the

post-conflict or natural disaster reconstruction in the alien's country of citizenship; and

"(iii) as determined by the Secretary of State in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security—

"(I) is a citizen of a country in which Armed Forces of the United States are engaged, or have engaged in the 10 years preceding such determination, in combat or peacekeeping operations;

"(II) is a citizen of a country where authorization for United Nations peacekeeping operations was initiated by the United Nations Security Council during the 10 years preceding such determination; or

"(III) is a citizen of a country which received, during the preceding 2 years, funding from the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance of the United States Agency for International Development in response to a declared disaster in such country by the United States Ambassador, the Chief of the U.S. Mission, or the appropriate Assistant Secretary of State, that is beyond the ability of such country's response capacity and warrants a response by the United States Government."

SEC. 4. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of State, shall submit a report to Congress that describes—

(1) the countries of citizenship of the participants in the Return of Talent Program established under section 317A of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as added by section 2;

(2) the post-conflict or natural disaster reconstruction efforts that benefitted, or were made possible, through participation in the program; and

(3) any other information that the Secretary of Homeland Security determines to be appropriate.

SEC. 5. REGULATIONS.

Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall promulgate regulations to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services for fiscal year 2008, such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS**SENATE RESOLUTION 249—HONORING THE LIFE OF RUTH BELL GRAHAM**

Mrs. DOLE (for herself, Mr. BURR, Mr. STEVENS, and Mr. McCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 249

Whereas Ruth Bell Graham returned to the United States to attend Wheaton College, where she met and fell in love with her future husband, Billy Graham, who would become one of the most acclaimed evangelists in the world;

Whereas Ruth Bell Graham married Billy Graham on August 13, 1943 at Montreat Presbyterian Church in her beloved Western North Carolina;

Whereas Ruth Bell Graham was the devoted mother of five children (Virginia, Anne, Ruth, Franklin, and Nelson Edman) and the grandmother of 19 grandchildren;

Whereas Ruth Bell Graham was a renowned author and poet who penned 14 books

that have moved and inspired people around the globe;

Whereas Ruth Bell Graham and Billy Graham were recognized with the Congressional Gold Medal in 1996 for their "outstanding and lasting contributions to morality, racial equality, family, philanthropy, and religion"; and

Whereas Ruth Bell Graham touched countless lives worldwide by sharing her tremendous faith, her deep compassion for the less fortunate, her great talents and her light-hearted wit.

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate honors the life, work, and legacy of Ruth Bell Graham, a loyal companion who shined with grace and courage beside her husband Billy Graham, and a dedicated mother who fostered individuality and humility in her five children.

SENATE RESOLUTION 250—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE CONDEMNING THE MILITARY JUNTA IN BURMA FOR ITS CONTINUED DETENTION OF AUNG SAN SUU KYI AND OTHER POLITICAL PRISONERS

Mr. McCONNELL (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. McCain, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. LUGAR, Mrs. LINCOLN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mrs. DOLE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 250

Whereas Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi has dedicated her life to the peaceful, non-violent movement for democracy and reconciliation in the Union of Burma;

Whereas Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy won a majority of parliamentary seats in Burma's last election held in 1990;

Whereas the State Peace and Development Council of Burma refuses to cede power and permit representative government and has detained Aung San Suu Kyi under house arrest for 11 of the last 17 years;

Whereas the ruling military junta has committed numerous, well-documented atrocities against the people of Burma;

Whereas Aung San Suu Kyi continues to promote peaceful dialogue and reconciliation despite mistreatment from the State Peace and Development Council;

Whereas the United States recognizes and supports the dedication and commitment to freedom demonstrated by Aung San Suu Kyi: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi for her courage and devotion to the people of the Union of Burma and their struggle for democracy; and

(2) calls for the immediate release of Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners by the State Peace and Development Council.

SENATE RESOLUTION 251—HONORING THE FIREFIGHTERS AND OTHER PUBLIC SERVANTS WHO RESPONDED TO THE FIRE IN CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA, ON JUNE 18, 2007

Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. DODD, Mr. McCain, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. KERRY, Mr. ISAKSON, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. BIDEN, and Mr.

BURR) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 251

Whereas at approximately 7:00 P.M. on June 18, 2007, a tragic fire started at the Sofa Super Store in Charleston, South Carolina;

Whereas despite the flames that engulfed the building, the brave men and women of the Charleston Fire Department (Department) fulfilled their duty by rushing inside as others fled for their lives;

Whereas the fire quickly grew out of control and trapped 2 store employees inside;

Whereas the firefighters attempted to punch through the building walls in a selfless effort to save the lives of these employees;

Whereas the roof of the building collapsed, trapping the firefighters inside;

Whereas Captain William "Billy" Hutchinson, a 30-year veteran of the Department, lost his life in the fire;

Whereas Captain Mike Benke, a 20-year veteran of the Department, lost his life in the fire;

Whereas Captain Louis Mulkey, an 11-year veteran of the Department, lost his life in the fire;

Whereas Engineer Mark Kelsey, a 12-year veteran of the Department, lost his life in the fire;

Whereas Engineer Bradford "Brad" Baity, a 9-year veteran of the Department, lost his life in the fire;

Whereas Assistant Engineer Michael French, a 1½-year veteran of the Department, lost his life in the fire;

Whereas Fire Fighter James "Earl" Drayton, a 32-year veteran of the Department, lost his life in the fire;

Whereas Fire Fighter Brandon Thompson, a 4-year veteran of the Department, lost his life in the fire;

Whereas Fire Fighter Melven Champaign, a 2-year veteran of the Department, lost his life in the fire;

Whereas the extraordinary courage and sacrifice of these firefighters reflects the spirit of South Carolina, as well as the spirit of our great Nation;

Whereas the United States has not experienced such a devastating loss of firefighters since the horrific events on September 11, 2001; and

Whereas a grateful Nation mourns the loss of these heroes and vows that their sacrifices were not made in vain: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors William "Billy" Hutchinson, Mike Benke, Louis Mulkey, Mark Kelsey, Bradford "Brad" Baity, Michael French, James "Earl" Drayton, Brandon Thompson, and Melven Champaign, who lost their lives in the course of their duty as firefighters, and recognizes them for their bravery and sacrifice;

(2) extends its deepest sympathy to the families of these 9 brave heroes;

(3) honors all the firefighters and other public servants who contributed to battling the fire; and

(4) pledges to continue to support and to work on behalf of the firefighters who risk their lives each day to ensure the safety of all Americans.

SENATE RESOLUTION 252—RECOGNIZING THE INCREASINGLY MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

Mr. BOND (for himself and Mr. INOUE) submitted the following reso-

lution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 252

Whereas the historical ties between the United States and the Indonesia go back to the period of Indonesian struggle for independence and the early years of its independence in 1945;

Whereas the constitutionally required "free and active" foreign policy of Indonesia has largely resulted in a close relationship with the United States, and this relationship reflects the growing connections between the developed and the developing world;

Whereas, following the effects of the Asian financial crisis in 1998, Indonesia has instituted numerous democratic reforms, including—

(1) amending the country's constitution in order to be more democratic and transparent;

(2) holding the country's first ever direct presidential election in 2004 and direct, nationwide local elections starting in 2006; and

(3) giving the judicial branch independent administrative and financial responsibility for all courts in 2004;

Whereas the government of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the first directly elected President of Indonesia, is strongly committed to strengthening the country's democracy and remains focused on developing good governance and promoting and protecting human rights, civil liberties, a free press, and a vibrant civil society;

Whereas the Government of Indonesia continues to reform its military in accordance with internationally accepted democratic principles;

Whereas Indonesia signed a peace agreement in August 2005 ending the conflict in Aceh, met its obligations under the agreement, oversaw the return of normalcy to Aceh, and held free, transparent, and peaceful elections for local government leaders in December 2006;

Whereas the Government of Indonesia has worked and continues to work toward peaceful solutions to other internal conflicts, including Papua, with concern for the welfare and security of the entire population;

Whereas, in parallel with the recovery of Indonesia's economic and political stability following the 1998 Asian financial crisis, the country has regained its pivotal role in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and continues to work toward a secure, peaceful, and vibrant Southeast Asia, particularly by proposing successfully the ASEAN Security Community, the ASEAN Economic Community, and the ASEAN Socio-cultural Community;

Whereas the Government and people of Indonesia have endured several terrorist bombings, have shown resilience in the fight against international terrorism by apprehending and bringing to justice numerous perpetrators, and remain open to international cooperation in this area;

Whereas the Government of Indonesia, together with the Governments of Malaysia and Singapore as fellow littoral states and user-countries, has maintained and is further strengthening efforts to secure the important international shipping lane in the Malacca Strait;

Whereas, as shown in international fora, the Government of Indonesia remains committed to addressing the problems related to the control of the spread of weapons of mass destruction;

Whereas the Government of Indonesia has deployed a military battalion to support the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) peacekeeping operations, and as the world's largest Muslim democracy, has made important contributions to the facili-

tation of various dialogues among Islamic factions in the Middle East; and

Whereas, though the Government of Indonesia has shown significant progress in the areas of democracy, good governance, human rights, and counter terrorism, there remains much to be done and many reforms yet to be implemented: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the progress made by the Government of Indonesia in its efforts to promote democracy;

(2) expresses ongoing support for further democratic reform in Indonesia and the efforts of the Government and the people of Indonesia toward developing good governance;

(3) encourages the Government and the People of Indonesia to continue working to ensure the promotion and protection of human rights, civil liberties, a free press, and a strong civil society in Indonesia; and

(4) encourages the President, the Secretary of State, and other officials of the United States Government to continue assisting the Government of Indonesia in its efforts to promote democracy and ensure the liberty and welfare of the people of Indonesia.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, as a Member of the Senate who has traveled every year to Southeast Asia and met frequently with government leaders from that region when they visited the United States, I believe America has great interests in that region, and that we need to pay more attention here in Washington, DC and across the Nation, to our allies and partners in Southeast Asia.

This region, economically, politically, strategically important, it is our 5th largest in total volume trading partner. Serving as a cornerstone to SE Asia and the lynchpin to its stability, prosperity and security lie in Indonesia.

When I have asked leaders from all over Southeast Asia how they are doing, they always include a reference to Indonesia. Indonesia is the world's largest Muslim country and as a democracy, that makes it the largest Muslim democracy as well.

On the darker side, it is also a key country in what many in the intelligence community, and I agree, is the second front in the war on terror that we confront. It is home to the Islamist terrorist group, Jemah Islamiya, which next to al-Qaeda, is one of the greatest threats to American security and peace in the world.

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono has been executing an ambitious agenda for anti-corruption, political and economic reform. He represents Indonesia's best hope for continuing down a path towards stability, prosperity, pluralism, democracy and security. Such a path is not only in our own economic interests, but is also essential to control the terrorist threat and the reach of al-Qaeda and Jemah Islamiyah in Southeast Asia.

Since the fall of President Suharto, the Indonesian people have elected three new presidents, impeached one, and experienced several peaceful transfers of power. They have held direct elections of a president. They have amended their constitution in order to